

# HIV/AIDS, Friends & Families

Grade 11 and 12, Lesson #15

## **Time Needed**

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One class period.

## **Student Learning Objectives**

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To be able to...

1. Imagine what it might feel like to learn that you are HIV-positive, or to face the news that a friend or family member has HIV or AIDS.
2. Describe three possible constructive actions you could take to serve your community and feel less powerless in the face of the epidemic.
3. Identify at least three local and accessible resources that could provide you HIV information and/or social and health services.

## **Agenda**

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1. Explain the lesson's relevance and purpose.
2. Help students personalize HIV and develop empathy by using a panel, having students present oral reports on their HIV-related Individual Field Trips, and/or discussion.
3. Empower students by discussing specific behaviors an individual can do to turn sadness into action.
4. Remind students of yesterday's homework assignment, and hand out extra copies to those who were absent.

## **Materials Needed**

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One per student of ...

*HIV/AIDS Resource List*

**NOTE: If you live outside King County, WA** you will need to compile your own  
*Local HIV/AIDS Resource List* (see page 15-9 for a master page)

At least six per class of ...

*Quilt Information Sheet*

## Activities

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1. Explain the lesson's purpose and relevance:

*In the last couple of lessons, we reviewed the facts about HIV and AIDS. We focused most recently on testing. Today we'll focus less on facts and more on feelings. Tomorrow, we'll focus on values.*

- *Today, you will have a chance to think about what it might feel like to test positive for HIV antibodies or to develop AIDS.*
  - *Some of you may already know, from personal experience, what it is like to have a friend or family member with HIV. The rest of you will have a chance to imagine what it might be like.*
  - *You will have an opportunity to think about what a person could do to feel less powerless in the face of the epidemic.*
  - *If this lesson is emotionally difficult for you, I want to encourage you to talk about it (with family, with me in private, with a school counselor, with a member of your religious community if you belong to one, etc.).*
2. Personalize the issue of HIV disease and help students understand and empathize with the experience of those living with HIV/AIDS (and of their loved ones), in one of three ways. The most effective way, by far, is to invite a guest speaker or panel. If none is available, or if this conflicts with your school's or district's policies, you can introduce students to the emotional impact of HIV disease by doing Individual Field Trip Reports followed by discussion, or in a worst case scenario, just discussion. All three alternatives are elaborated below.

**a. Have as guest speaker(s) a person or panel who:**

- is/are living with HIV/AIDS,
- is/are the partner, family member, or surviving loved one of someone with HIV/AIDS
- works with people with HIV/AIDS as a health professional or volunteer

If you invite a guest speaker or panel, we suggest you introduce them in the following way:

Today's guests are here to share their stories ... to help us understand what it is like to live with HIV disease or to love someone with the disease. They will tell us a little about themselves, and about when and how they found out about the illness and what life has been like since then. You are welcome to ask questions. I have already explained our class ground rules to the panelists:

- they have the right not to answer any questions they choose not to,
- we've all made a serious commitment ... to protect one another's confidentiality, to respect one another's right to differing opinions and ... to try to protect one another's feelings,
- these ground rules apply to (and protect) them as well.

**NOTE:** Do not introduce people as "AIDS victims." The terms "people living with HIV disease" or "with AIDS" are not only more accurate, but also more respectful and

empowering. The word “victim” implies a passive state of constant illness; many people with HIV find it offensive.

In the Seattle area, we recommend the following sources for speakers:

Dunshee House .....(206) 322-2437  
 Lifelong AIDS Alliance ..... (206) 328-8979  
 Madison Clinic.....(206) 731-5100 (check?)

If you live outside the Seattle area, call your local or state AIDS hotline.

- b. Have students provide oral reports on their HIV-related Individual Field Trips.** See Lesson 1 for details on setting up these Individual field Trips. Follow the oral reports with discussion.

- c. Conduct an imagination/discussion exercise:**

Begin by asking students to imagine that they have just waited a week for the results of their own HIV antibody test. Introduce yourself as the clinician (try truly to feel the part, if you can) and deliver the news:

*“I’m sorry to have to tell you this. Your test was positive. We repeated the ELISA and we did a Western Blot to confirm it. Those tests were positive also.”*

Allow a half a minute of silence so that students can pay attention to their feelings. Then, ask volunteers to share their reactions to the news. What did they feel?

Ask the students to pair up and allow each partner a couple of minutes to talk about what they felt during your brief role play. Ask the students to consider who they might turn to for emotional support if they had tested positive for HIV, or how they might be a good friend to someone who confided in them that they had tested positive for HIV. What would be the downsides of talking with a family member or friend about testing HIV positive? Come back into a big group and ask volunteers to share some of the feelings they described.

As they respond, name their feelings. Let them know that many people with HIV feel the ways they are describing:

**Denial:** *“It can’t be true.” “I don’t believe it. I’m going to another clinic.”*

**Fear:** *“Will I develop AIDS? Am I going to die?” “Will the people I love, still love me?”*

**Needing to place blame on themselves:** *“If only I hadn’t ...” “I deserve to die.”*

**...Or on others:** *“It’s not fair!” “I hate whoever did this to me.”*

**Numbness:** *“I don’t feel anything at all.”*

Emphasize that **grief is important**, that **it’s healthy** and normal to respond to this kind of tragedy with tears. Point out, too, however, that **feeling overwhelmed and**

**powerless is not healthy or helpful**, at least not to maintain these feelings for a long time:

### 3. It becomes important to turn sadness into action.

Explain: *Action heals. Let's talk about what people, what each of us in this room, could do in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Any ideas?*

Ask people to begin each suggestion either with the phrase, "**I could ...**" or with the phrase, "**A few of us could ...**" (not as a commitment to act, but to keep the ideas practical and achievable, on a personal scale). Elicit as many ideas from the class as possible.

Supplement their ideas with the following:

- I could **think** about my own attitudes. Change starts at home. The HIV/AIDS homework assignment will give each of us a chance to do a little of that.
- I could **share** what I've learned with my friends, my family, my children. I could gently correct misinformation when I hear it. I could firmly express my objections when I hear prejudice.
- I could **write** to a legislator (newspaper editor, school administrator, religious leader). I could thank them for a sensible, humane law (editorial, policy, sermon) or I could object to an illogical, mean-spirited one.
- I could **volunteer** a couple of hours a week of my time. There are hotlines that need phone workers. There are buddy programs, where people can spend a couple of hours a week grocery shopping for someone with AIDS who may be too weak at the moment to go out, or just hanging out together. There are hospitals where volunteers come in once a day just to hold and cuddle babies with HIV/AIDS, babies who might otherwise not have visitors.

Hand out The Resource List and point out a few organizations with which people could consider volunteering.

- A few of us could **organize a fundraiser** (a recycling drive, a bake sale, a dance marathon). Money is always needed-- for research, education, medical care and services for people who have HIV or AIDS.
- I could **participate in an existing fundraiser**. In Seattle, for example, there is an annual walkathon sponsored by the Lifelong AIDS Alliance. I could raise pledges and walk. I could organize a team of walkers.
- A few of us could **make a panel for the AIDS memorial quilt**. We could decide not to let the world forget someone with AIDS who has died.

(If anyone in the class seems seriously interested in pursuing the idea of a quilt panel, give them a copy of the Quilt Information Sheet.)

- I could protect myself and people I love (now and in the future) from the disease. That means, *for absolute protection*, **abstaining from sexual intercourse and from IV drugs.**
- I could do the next safest thing, deciding to **only ever have sexual intercourse in a relationship that is:**
  - ✓ **long-term** (several year minimum? marriage?),
  - ✓ **mutually monogamous** (and where each of us has proven, **over time and through our behavior**, that we can be trusted),
  - ✓ **between uninfected persons** (that is, a relationship in which I truly believe, after knowing this person over time, that we are both virgins, or that if not, we have been tested adequately and in the past 6 months, that neither has had sex outside the relationship nor has ever shared a needle). [sometimes in relationships that seem to be headed for long-term monogamy people use condoms when they first become sexually active; then when they've been intimate exclusively with each other for at least 3 or preferably 6 months, both get tested to be sure neither one has some disease the other doesn't have; at that point they abandon the condoms and make a commitment to only have sex with each other, or if they every have sex with others to always use condoms in those situations. This is called "negotiated safety".]

Note that, outside of this sort of very long-term relationship, trusting another's behavior is extremely risky, definitely more risky than using a condom. This does not necessarily mean that one's partner/spouse would intentionally lie. Sometimes people just don't know themselves as well as they might; sometimes people may have misunderstood information. Other times, a person might be trying to protect you from emotional hurt by not telling you about having loved someone else.

- **I could** reduce my risk and the risk to those I care about by deciding to **use new, lubricated, latex condoms**, and/or **dental dams** consistently (every single time one has intercourse, with no exceptions) **and** correctly/carefully (from the very beginning of touching, putting on condom as soon as erect and before entry; leaving space in the end of the condom, and removing it carefully before the penis becomes soft).
  - If I know that I've used IV drugs, or that my partner has, **I could** reduce our risk (even though this wouldn't approach the protection level of abstinence) by **never sharing needles** with anyone or **sterilizing them** before use (for one's own protection) and after use (to protect others).
4. Remind students of yesterday's *Family/Friend Homework* assignment, and hand out extra copies to those who were absent.

# King Co. HIV/AIDS Resource List \*

**Testing, Treatment and Answers** to your questions are available free or at low cost, at many community clinics and at any Public Health center. Call first for an appointment. Interpreters are available in most languages (including sign-language) if the person making the appointment asks for one. Call:

Auburn.....	296-8400 or 253-833-8400
Bellevue.....	296-4920
Columbia City (South Seattle).....	296-4650
Downtown (Seattle).....	296-4755
Federal Way .....	296-8410
Harborview STD Clinic (Seattle) .....	731-3590
Northgate (North Seattle) .....	296-4990
Renton .....	296-4700
White Center (West Seattle) .....	296-4646

## Free hotlines:

HIV/STD Information Line .....	Seattle: 205-7837 King County: 1-800-678-1595 TTY: 206-296-4843 Washington: 1-800-272-AIDS United States: 1-800-342-AIDS
Alcohol/Drug 24-hour Help-Line .....	Seattle: 722-3700 Washington: 1-800-562-1240 TTY: 206-722-3724
King Crisis Line .....	2-1-1
Trevor National Confidential Gay & Questioning Teen Helpline .....	1-866-488-7386

## Non-profit AIDS Education and Service programs include:

*(Most have websites that can be accessed for introductory information)*

AIDS Housing of Washington .....	322-9444
American Red Cross .....	323-2345
Lifelong AIDS Alliance.....	328-8979
Multifaith Works .....	324-1520
People of Color Against AIDS Network (POCAAN) .....	322-7061

Find other local resources here: <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/apu/resources/list.htm>

## Programs for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender & Questioning youth and their allies:

Lambert House (Seattle) .....	206-322-2515
B-GLAD at Youth Eastside Services (Bellevue) .....	425-747-4937
Highline Rainbow Youth (Burien) .....	206-243-5544 x 320
GLOBE at Snohomish County Health District (Everett) .....	425-339-5251
InsideOut at the Center for Human Services (Shoreline) .....	206-362-7282 x 242
OASIS at Pierce County AIDS Foundation (Tacoma) .....	253-671-2838
Project Count on ME at POCAAN (Tacoma) .....	253-272-2577

Find other local resources here: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-LocalCommunityResources-Region11.html>

**\* Model copy for use in King County, WA**

# Local HIV/AIDS Resource List \*

**Testing, Treatment and Answers** to your questions are available free or at low cost, at many community clinics and at any Public Health center. Call first for an appointment. Interpreters are available in most languages (including sign-language) if the person making the appointment asks for one. In our community, call:

**Free hotlines:**

- HIV/STD Information Line ..... local:  
state/province:  
United States: 1-800-342-AIDS
- Alcohol/Drug 24-hour Help-Line ..... local:  
state/province:
- Crisis Line.....
- Trevor National Confidential Gay & Questioning Teen Helpline .....1-866-488-7386

**Non-profit AIDS Education and Service programs include:**

Find your local resources here: <http://www.siecus.org/school/hiv/hiv0000.html>

**Programs for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender & Questioning youth and their allies:**

Find your local resources here: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/blackboard-organizations.html>

**\* *Master copy, on which teachers outside King County, WA can list their local resources***

# Quilt Information Sheet

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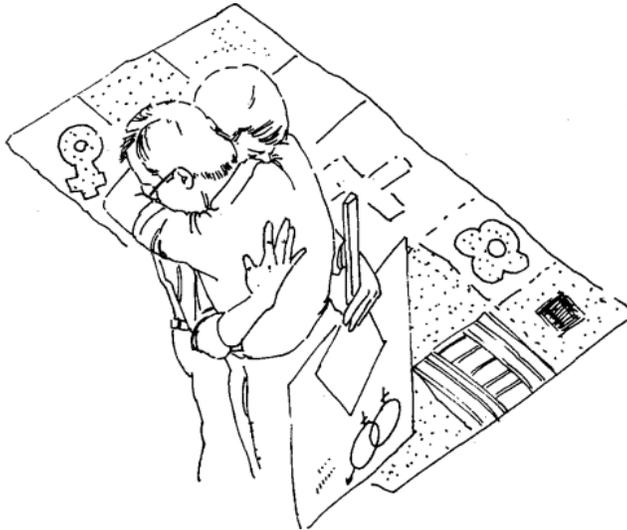
***“The heart and soul of the quilt resides in homes across the country when friends and families gather to sew together their memories of love.”***

-- Cleve Jones, founder of the NAMES Project

## About The AIDS Memorial Quilt

Begun in 1987, the Quilt includes more than 40,000 panels.<sup>1</sup> As keepers of the Quilt, the goals of the NAMES Project are to:

- Illustrate the depth of the AIDS epidemic by showing the humanity behind the statistics.
- Provide a memorial for those whose lives have been lost because of AIDS.
- Provide a positive and creative means of expression for those whose lives have been touched by this epidemic.
- Raise vital funds and encourage support for people living with HIV/AIDS and for their loved ones.



The NAMES Project has chapters in 20 U.S. cities and international affiliates in 43 countries around the world. The Quilt is the size of nearly 275 basketball courts, including its walkways. It weighs over 54 tons and has been viewed by over 15 million visitors. There are more than 83,900 names on the quilt, which represents about 17.5% of all deaths from AIDS in the United States.<sup>2</sup> The quilt has raised over \$3 million for direct services for people with AIDS.<sup>3</sup>

If there is someone in your life, your school, your town who has died of AIDS, someone you don't want the world to forget, maybe you'd like to make a panel to keep the memory alive. Or perhaps you are thinking about making a panel for someone who died alone, without friends and family to make a panel in his or her honor.

The panels that make up the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt were made by all sorts of people, in all kinds of colors, fabrics and styles. You don't have to be a professional artist to create a moving tribute. It doesn't matter if you use paint or fine needle work; your caring will show. How do you go about making a panel for the quilt?

## How to Create a Panel

1. **Talk with people who loved the person and ask their permission to make a panel.** Call your local NAMES Project for advice about this. (Seattle no longer has a local office, but there are regional offices that can be contacted. Check the website [http://www.aidsquilt.org/chapters\\_r3.htm](http://www.aidsquilt.org/chapters_r3.htm) for up-to-date information.)
2. **Think about, or find out, what made the person special** -- what in particular is important to remember about the person.

***“Dear Mommy, I wrote this letter, ‘cause I love you with all my heart. So to remember you, we made a Quilt. We cried, we laughed. But most of all we were happy just sewing our memories of you on the Quilt.”***

-- Daughter, age 11 Boston, MA

3. **Design the panel.** Include the name of your friend. Feel free to include additional information, such as the dates of birth and death, and a hometown. Be creative about messages.



4. **Choose your materials.** Select a durable, medium-weight, non-stretch fabric such as cotton for the background. Cut and hem it to a finished size of 3 feet by 6 feet.

5. **Make the panel itself.** You may want to use:

**Appliqué** ... Sew fabric letters and small mementos onto the background. Do not use glue; it will not last.

**Paint** ... Brush on textile paint or color-fast dye, or use an indelible ink pen. No “puffy” paint; it is too sticky.

**Collage** ... The best way to include photos or letters is to Xerox them onto iron-on transfers, iron them onto 100% cotton fabric and sew that fabric to the panel.

6. **Write a biography** ... a one or two-page description of the person you have remembered. Get a photograph (or a Xerox of a photo), if you can, to enclose with the panel and the written biography.

7. **Fill out the Panel Maker Information Form**, which can be downloaded from <http://www.aidsquilt.org/makeapanel.htm>.



8. **Wrap it all securely.** Enclose a contribution, if you can.

9. **Mail it to:** Attn: New Panels  
The NAMES Project Foundation  
101 Krog Street  
Atlanta, GA 30307

It is best to send the package by registered mail or with a carrier, like UPS or Federal Express, that can track the package.

***“I just saw people flocking to this place, and I came over to see what was there. I had no idea about all of the people who had been killed by AIDS. I stayed ... thinking this is the saddest, most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen. I think I finally understand what AIDS is really about.”***

-- Parent, Anchorage, AK

<sup>1</sup> *About the Quilt*. (2005). Retrieved October 2, 2006 from The AIDS Memorial Quilt: The NAMES Project Foundation: <http://www.aidsquilt.org/>.

<sup>2</sup> *Quilt Facts*. (2006). Retrieved October 2, 2006 from The AIDS Memorial Quilt: The NAMES Project Foundation: <http://www.aidsquilt.org/quiltfacts.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.